DISCUSSION.*

Answer to Q. 4. Your question concerning the meaning of the three terms *correlated*, *fused* and *general mathematics* may perhaps be answered as follows:

These terms are still used rather vaguely and indiscriminately by authors. To me their meaning is this: The first two (correlation and fusion) refer to the manner in which the material is arranged or interwoven. The third (general mathematics) refers to the selection of material and not necessarily to its arrangement. That is, a text in "general mathematics" might follow the old compartment plan, or might employ either correlation or fusion. In the case of *correlated* mathematics each subject maintains its identity, is treated in separate chapters or in different books. But every opportunity is used to establish bonds of connections between the ideas, principles, and processes contributed by each subject. (It is the plan followed so largely in European schools where two or more mathematical subjects are taught side by side, but in close application with each other.)

Fusion implies that the separate treatment of the mathematical subjects has been given up. Fusion may be partial or complete. Thus, for many years foreign authors have tried to fuse plane and solid geometry. Again, trigonometry and geometry may be closely interwoven. Very few serious attempts have been made to blend *all* phases of elementary mathematics. The result so far seems to have been confusion. Thus, algebra and *elementary* geometry can be "correlated" or "fused" only in the field of mensuration. As soon as logical

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demonstration appears in geometry, with its chains of connected theorems, *fusion* fails.

Texts in *general* mathematics, whatever arrangement they may use, attempt to select only topics of vital importance, material which is likely to serve the "general reader." Without a far-reaching analysis of the cultural and utilitarian significance of mathematics in everyday life a text in general mathematics must remain the author's subjective interpretation of the position which mathematics occupies in the affairs of the general reader.

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Q. 5. If the mathematics teachers in a school are given the responsibility of selecting one of their group for the headship of their department, what qualities should they look for, and how should they be weighted? R. B. D.

Q. 6. Is it advisable to have children check the solution of an equation when the check is far more difficult than the solution? A. R. W.